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ABSTRACT

This plan describes the challenges facing higher education in New York State and the goals devised by the Board of Regents to address these challenges. The Regents publish such a plan covering two-year and four-year public, private and proprietary institutions every eight years. The major challenges facing higher education in New York are: (1) the need for access to quality higher education; (2) affordability; (3) a changing labor market; (4) changing demographics; and (5) declining resources. To address these challenges, the Regents have devised three goals: Goal A is that New York will provide education that equips people with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to society and be a success in the work force. Goal B is for New York to assure affordable and equitable access to a coordinated system of higher education. Goal C states that New York will provide a cost-effective and quality system. For each goal, this plan describes a series of objectives and strategies to be followed for successful completion of that goal. Included in these objectives are plans to facilitate the transfer of credit between two- and four-year institutions, offer nationally competitive programs at the associate degree level and develop programs that cater to adult education needs. (RDG)

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The Statewide Plan For Higher Education 1996-2004

November 1996



The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Higher Education

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THE STATEWIDE PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION 1996-2004

VISION

New York's higher education system will assure affordable and equitable access to a coordinated, cost-effective system of quality higher education that equips New Yorkers with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society and thrive in the economy.

This vision serves as the basis for the new statewide plan of action that will guide the Regents leadership of the State's higher education system for the period 1996-2004. As prescribed by Section 237 of Education Law, the Regents publish such a plan every eight years to provide cohesiveness and direction to the higher education system of New York State.

New York's higher education system is part of The University of the State of New York, the most comprehensive educational organization in the world. As established in the New York State Constitution, The University is governed by the Board of Regents and embraces all education in New York, public and private, from prekindergarten through postdoctoral. The higher education portion of The University is composed of 254 degree-granting institutions: 61 campuses of the State University of New York, 21 campuses of The City University of New York, 141 independent colleges and universities, and 31 proprietary colleges. In addition, there are 263 nondegree-granting institutions offering vocational programs that are not covered by Section 237 of Education Law and therefore not included in this Plan.

The following is a description of the challenges New York faces, and the specific plan of action the Regents have devised to address these challenges and to reach their goals. The Regents will work in partnership with the institutions, schools, corporations, government, the public, and other stakeholders to implement this ambitious plan.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

To achieve our vision for higher education in New York, we have developed a plan that recognizes the many challenges we face.

Need for Quality Higher Education New Yorkers must have access to quality higher education at all levels. Institutions, employers and others should have confidence in the minimum expectations that associate, baccalaureate, masters and doctorate degrees awarded by New York institutions represent. Higher education institutions need to raise standards of achievement and take greater responsibility for the intellectual development of their students.

Affordability Increasing costs of higher education, decreasing Federal and State funding, and the growing gap between the wealthy and the poor threaten New Yorkers' ability to afford education and diminish higher education's contribution to upward social and economic mobility. In the past 10 years, the cost of attending college has risen 80 percent while family income rose only 30 percent and Pell Grants rose only 10 percent. Borrowing for college increased 39 percent from 1991 to 1995, at least in part because Tuition Assistance Program awards were reduced.

Changing Labor Market A global economy, technological advances, welfare reform, immigration and variations in public and private sector employment require higher education institutions to be responsive to student expectations and to employer and worker needs by providing programs that enable students and workers to gain marketable knowledge and skills. The demand for adult higher education will continue to grow in the near future.

Changing Demographics One in six New Yorkers is foreign born, 27 percent of first time full-time college students are Black or Hispanic, and the number of postsecondary students with disabilities doubled between 1984 and 1994 to over 26,000. Increasing numbers of ethnic minorities, non-English speaking immigrants, persons with disabilities, and other persons historically underrepresented in higher education will require increased nontraditional programs and support services if higher education is to remain a gateway to opportunity.

Declining Resources The U.S. Department of Education reports that state per-student spending in New York, when adjusted for inflation, is now 13 percent lower than it was in 1984. New York ranks 42nd in state and local expenditures for higher education and was one of four states to decrease spending between 1993 and 1996. Reduced State and Federal funding forces higher education institutions to adopt cost-cutting measures that endanger their ability to provide quality education and conduct research.

HOW DO WE MEET THESE CHALLENGES?

To address these challenges, the Regents set forth three goals for the higher education system for the period 1996-2004. On the following pages we explicate the goals and outline the objectives the Regents have adopted to achieve these goals by 2004. Listed under each objective are examples of strategies the Education Department will help implement in collaboration with the higher education institutions and other stakeholders. During the period of this plan, the Regents will develop additional policy initiatives to achieve these objectives and, if appropriate, additional objectives and strategies. Also, in consultation with higher education institutions and other stakeholders, we will develop performance indicators that will be used to measure progress toward the goals.

To implement this plan, the Regents and the Department will employ the following tools:

- Advisory groups - We will convene groups broadly representative of all stakeholders and will consult with them to better understand their needs and viewpoints.
- Partnerships - We will strongly encourage public and independent higher education institutions to address capacity issues through collaborative efforts in their regions.
- Legislation and regulations - In support of policy goals, we will revise regulations, as needed, and work in cooperation with stakeholders and legislators to support new and amended legislation.
- Advocacy - We will demonstrate the courage to speak up for the educational needs of all people and will lead the higher education system toward improved opportunities and higher quality education.
- Accountability - We will hold higher education institutions accountable for furthering the goals and objectives in this Plan. New programs will be expected to demonstrate how they further the Regents goals for higher education.

Goal A. New York will provide quality higher education that equips New Yorkers with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, compete successfully in the work force, and appreciate life-long learning.

This means that the higher education system must:

- provide students with an understanding of the importance of intellectual pursuits and lifelong learning, and with the capacity to adapt to a changing society
- offer nationally-competitive programs at the associate, baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels that ensure that New Yorkers are prepared for the global economy
- raise standards for teacher education to improve student achievement in elementary, middle and secondary schools
- establish partnerships with business to identify marketable knowledge and skills

Objective 1:

Graduates of higher education will have the general knowledge and skills necessary to participate in and contribute to a democratic society and to enhance their opportunities to expand their lives as educated individuals.

Strategies:

- ✧ Strengthen college and university programs in order to prepare informed citizens who have a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and an understanding of their civic responsibilities.
- ✧ Expect higher education institutions to help students develop respect and tolerance for others, ethical values, aesthetic sensitivity, and skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.
- ✧ Develop an annual performance reporting system for higher education institutions.
- ✧ Urge colleges and universities to increase faculty diversity in order to provide a broad range of perspectives on the campus and in the classroom.

Objective 2:

Graduates of professional and technical programs will be prepared for challenging employment related to their education and training.

Strategies:

Institutions offering programs leading directly to employment should work with business and industry, the Department of Labor, and community-based and other non-governmental organizations to:

- ◆ Offer nationally-competitive pre-professional, professional, and technical programs at the associate and higher degree levels that prepare graduates for the careers of the future.
- ◆ Build internships and applied learning into the curricula.
- ◆ Improve job placement of graduates.
- ◆ Monitor their graduates' satisfaction with their education and employers' satisfaction with their graduates' performance and make this information public.

Objective 3:

Graduates trained for the licensed professions will be qualified and sufficient in number to meet regional needs throughout New York State and contribute to the national pool of licensed professionals.

Strategies:

- ◇ Identify areas of shortage and surplus by profession and region, educate a sufficient supply of licensed professionals and encourage the development of attractive working conditions and recruitment strategies to meet regional needs.
- ◇ Increase collaboration between higher education institutions and high schools to ensure that high school students interested in professional careers are fully prepared to undertake undergraduate professional and preprofessional programs.

- ✧ Replicate successful programs that prepare students from underrepresented groups to pursue careers in science and technology and the licensed professions so that their participation rate reflects their proportion of the population.
- ✧ Report the results of New York students on professional licensure examinations.

Objective 4:

New York State will support basic and applied research that significantly contributes to human knowledge and to the well being of our citizens, and which has the potential to enhance the economy, address societal problems, and protect the environment.

Strategies:

- ✧ Identify and promote areas of research that can improve New York State's community, economy, and environment and facilitate increased collaboration among researchers both within the State, and beyond.
- ✧ Advocate for increased research grants to universities to advance basic research, and encourage institutions to include graduate students on basic research teams.
- ✧ Encourage partnerships between higher education institutions and business and industry, cultural institutions, and the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies to further applied research that benefits the State.
- ✧ Enable institutions to share research developments and results via technology.

Objective 5:

Graduates prepared as teachers and school administrators will be able to meet the diverse needs of students in urban, suburban, and rural areas and in low-performing schools.

Strategies:

- ✧ Raise standards for teacher education programs and certification exams and clearly communicate them.

- ❖ Hold institutions accountable for meeting standards within a specified period and provide them needed technical assistance. Deregister programs that do not meet the standards or whose students fail to pass the exams.
- ❖ Work with higher education institutions to form additional partnerships with school districts to:
 - improve preservice and inservice training for teachers and school administrators;
 - replicate model teacher education programs such as those developed by Teacher Opportunity Corps (TOC) projects;
 - develop improved teacher education curricula;
 - prepare existing teachers to teach to the Regents new learning standards;
 - help teachers use technology as an instructional tool in the classroom; and
 - develop curricula and student teaching experiences that prepare students to teach in a variety of environments and to teach students having a variety of needs and learning styles.
- ❖ Target technical assistance to teacher education programs whose interns and graduates have a high probability of teaching in New York City and other areas having large concentrations of low-income families and teacher shortages.
- ❖ Focus the efforts of higher education institutions, school districts and the New York City Board of Education to enable the 7,500 uncertified teachers in New York City and other urban areas to meet educational standards and achieve certification. Do not permit schools to employ teachers who fail to attain certification within prescribed time frames to continue to teach after 2000.

Objective 6:

All New Yorkers will have access to the lifelong education needed for employment, community service, and the enjoyment of life.

Strategies:

- ✧ Encourage higher education institutions, business and industry, and community-based and other non-governmental organizations to develop programs that meet adult education and training needs, including programs that provide literacy instruction for adults.
- ✧ Expect higher education institutions to tailor and strengthen programs for nontraditional students who already possess a college degree but lack particular skills essential to acquiring challenging employment (e.g., downsized workers, educated immigrants, adults with outdated degrees).
- ✧ Target resources to higher education institutions that work with the Departments of Education, Labor, and Social Services to provide work force and literacy training to welfare recipients. (By 2002, it is estimated that welfare reform efforts will require mandated work for an estimated 183,900 AFDC recipients, most of whom lack the education and skills to successfully enter the work force.)
- ✧ Expect higher education institutions to foster in all students a love for learning and lifelong education.

Objective 7:

Higher education institutions will increasingly perform and apply research to update higher education curricula.

Strategies:

- ✧ Encourage research to advance knowledge in all fields and seek increased Federal support.
- ✧ Disseminate research results on PreK-12 education and promote model programs that are effective in raising achievement levels of low-performing schools. Use the results to strengthen teacher education programs and PreK-12 education.

Goal B. New York will assure affordable and equitable access to a coordinated system of higher education.

If New York State is to increase its participation in the global economy and continue to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers, we must recognize that:

- knowledge is the State's key resource and all citizens need access to education
- the 80 percent increase in higher education costs in the past decade is limiting access
- State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) awards have decreased in real terms as well as in relation to tuition charges
- all demographic groups and sectors of society need access to higher education
- coordinated telecommunication efforts accessible to all can make higher education more affordable

Objective 1:

Economic barriers will not prevent a student from attaining a quality higher education in New York State.

Strategies:

- ✧ Increase State and Federal commitments to need-based financial aid for full- and part-time students. (In 1995-96, the maximum Pell Grant for the lowest income student covered only 34 percent of attendance costs at a public commuter college, 21 percent at a residential public college, and 10 percent at a residential private college. State TAP awards for lowest income students have been reduced to cover 90 percent of public college tuition rather than 100 percent.)
- ✧ Advocate for affordable tuition at public institutions.

- ❖ Use the Internet to provide high school students and their parents with clear and comprehensive information about financial aid and student costs of higher education.
- ❖ Enforce consistently high quality standards and encourage institutions to build partnerships to facilitate the transfer of credit between two- and four-year colleges, thus giving students maximum opportunity to obtain an affordable education within the shortest amount of time.
- ❖ Work with institutions, other stakeholders, and students to inform the public and elected officials of the importance of providing need based financial aid for students.
- ❖ Work with our stakeholders to explore new and/or better methods of providing student financial assistance to increase college attendance and completion.

Objective 2:

Persons from historically underrepresented groups will be represented within all areas and levels of higher education and the work force.

Strategies:

- ❖ Strengthen programs at institutions whose missions focus on promoting the education and social mobility of persons from groups which have been historically underrepresented in higher education.
- ❖ Develop outreach programs that actively provide clear and comprehensive information about higher education opportunities to underrepresented groups.
- ❖ Track higher education institutions' success in recruiting and graduating students from underrepresented groups.
- ❖ Encourage institutions to commit resources to hire faculty from historically underrepresented groups and to develop mentoring programs so faculty who are hired are able to advance academically.

Objective 3:

All students will have access to the support services and learning resources they need to succeed academically.

Strategies:

- ✧ Institutions will provide institutional and statewide on-line services for students with automated registration, financial aid information and application, transcript access, transfer, advisement, and library access.
- ✧ Require institutions with more flexible admissions standards to take greater responsibility for the development of their students by strengthening their remediation programs. Replicate successful intervention and counseling programs developed by the Higher Education Opportunity Program.
- ✧ Strengthen support services and improve access for students with disabilities.
- ✧ Promote research on the development of nontraditional services that will enable diverse groups to succeed in higher education and the work force. Use the Internet to provide institutions and individuals with information about effective services and model programs.
- ✧ Encourage institutions to form partnerships to develop courses using technology that help underprepared students to succeed academically.
- ✧ Hold the higher education system accountable for developing institutional and sectoral goals and strategies to increase the rate of student graduation over the next five years. (The institutional range of student completion of the associate degree in four years is 2.3 to 100 percent; for the baccalaureate degree in six years it is 19.7 to 91.7 percent.)

Objective 4:

All New Yorkers will have access via telecommunications and libraries to a statewide comprehensive, coordinated body of information pertaining to higher education resources and distance learning programs.

Strategies:

- ✧ Advocate for the Regents proposed legislation to connect all educational institutions to the Internet, including libraries and museums.
- ✧ Work with local business and industry and the Dormitory Authority to develop a statewide telecommunications infrastructure that provides access and equipment to all higher education institutions, PreK-12 schools, libraries, and museums.
- ✧ Provide a well-organized, comprehensive body of information on distance learning opportunities, English as a Second Language programs, institutional profiles, licensed professions, on-line support services, institutional performance reports, remedial services, and services for the disabled.
- ✧ Develop training in the use of distance learning and related information technologies for students, faculty, librarians, and other education professions, and encourage the development of high quality distance learning opportunities.

Goal C: New York will provide a cost-effective system of quality higher education.

We recognize that institutions are faced with rising costs. Many traditional approaches to reducing costs, however, such as increasing class sizes and faculty course loads, often reduce learning. We believe that institutions can decrease costs and increase effectiveness by:

- strengthening high school preparation (one-fifth of all undergraduate students take at least one remedial or developmental course)
- improving undergraduate learning standards
- diminishing costs of resource acquisition
- strengthening partnerships to reduce unnecessary duplication of programs and efforts
- making the best possible use of technology

Objective 1:

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All high school students will be adequately prepared for higher education.

Strategies:

- ✧ Create partnerships among schools, higher education institutions, business and industry, community-based and other non-governmental organizations, and teacher associations in order to reduce the expenditure of scarce higher education resources on remediation and on developmental courses and to foster equity. These partnerships will work to:
 - decrease the high school drop-out rate;
 - ensure that high school graduates are prepared for higher education;
 - expand opportunities for students to take college-level courses while in high school through advanced placement, credit validation, simultaneous attendance, and early entry;
 - assist schools to reduce violence, harassment, and discrimination; and
 - transform the environment of low-performing schools to attract teachers and improve academic performance.

Objective 2:

Higher education institutions will facilitate more effective learning.

Strategies:

- ✧ Hold institutions accountable for raising academic expectations of students, increasing minimum standards to high quality levels, and performing their unique missions with excellence.
- ✧ Promote research and faculty and professional staff development in:
 - the uses of technology in the classroom, distance learning, and remedial learning;
 - self-paced, learner-centered curricular designs; and
 - more effective uses of classroom instruction.

- ✧ Strengthen systems for student advisement on academic and career planning to help students more carefully choose courses and majors.

Objective 3:

Annual changes in the students' costs of attendance will not exceed national or regional norms and will not exceed the rate of inflation.

Strategies:

- ✧ Encourage sharing of resources, contracting for services, and other consortial type arrangements among public and independent higher education institutions to better use existing resources.
- ✧ Explore how institutions can work within their regions to achieve a competitive balance that fosters innovative, high-quality, and cost-effective programs.
- ✧ Develop incentive programs for business, industry, and cultural institutions to share their resources with higher education institutions.